1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

311 177 In the case of the Yaruros all of these factors have played an important role and are currently active in reducing their territories and food supply to a degree that will mean imminent extermination of the people. It is true that since the first settler arrived in their country the Yaruros could have made readjustments in their culture which perhaps might have permitted them to survive. They could have learned, for instance, to raise horses, cattle, and to cultivate the soil as the [178] Guajiros, living in a country similar to the llanos, have done. But they have chosen to remain firm in their own culture, own traditions, and own universe, and as a result are expecting to pay the penalty. Why they have failed to make the readjustment which would have brought them into a livable relationship with the newcomers and have persisted in keeping to their primitive, nomadic existence may be answered in the pages that follow.

361 Dependency on hunting, fishing, and gathering of edible fruits and roots imposes nomadism upon a people and prevents living together in large groups. The degree to which a people have to wander, the extent of the territory over which they must roam, and the size of the group, is dependent upon the abundance of the food supply in the region. The Yaruro hunting groups are small and they stay in one camp not more than a few days; so, they are to be met plying up and down the river in their canoes or traveling over land to the water holes, ever hunting for food.

HUNTING TERRITORIES

224 621 596 Each hunting group has a territory over which it is free to roam. Over this region only its members are allowed to hunt and gather fruits and roots, but the rivers, the main streams, are open to all. The accompanying map shows the limits of the present hunting territory [174] of the Yaruros of the Capanaparo. It would seem that anciently, when the Yaruros were more numerous, they roamed over a vaster region cut up into small portions over which hunting rights were distributed among various hunting family groups. I was assured that the Yaruros of the Sinaruco also have divided their country into family units.

619 101 There is also a sort of division among the Yaruros which transcends family grouping. The Yaruros of the Capanaparo, for instance, consider themselves a unit, though loosely bound, as distinct from the Yaruros of the Sinaruco, so that they consider the land drained by the Capanaparo as theirs and the region drained by the Sinaruco as the land of the Yaruros of that river. And yet, above all this, there seems to be a tribal feeling as opposed to the tribal divisions. The real significance of this is that among the Yaruros there is permitted a degree of mutuality in the use of the hunting rights

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

During the rainy season the seed of the chigua is gathered. It is crushed, toasted, and stored in small quantities in the same way as the changuango, provided, of course, that a spot is found high enough to keep it dry.

Social Organization and Social Customs

Economically the family hunting group is the basic unit, as has been shown in the previous chapter. In social matters, however, it is the moiety. Each family hunting group recognizes a headman and each moiety recognizes a chief who in all cases is the shaman. Both of these positions of authority are acquired only through personal merit. There is no inheritance of chieftainship or shamanism. If the nephew of a headman shows ability he may inherit his uncle's position, and theoretically this is the scheme. In natural practices we find that not only the Yaruros but perhaps a great many other primitive peoples are very realistic and are loath to give authority to an individual whose personality does not stand for leadership.

Every Yaruro is born in either the "Itciai" or "Puaná" moiety. Descent, with its social affinities, prerogatives, and obligations, being traced through the female line, the child belongs to its mother's moiety. Nothing is inherited from the father, who belongs to the other moiety, except obligations.

There is a legend among the Yaruros that two young men not finding any marriageable girls among their own people mated with the Jaguar and with the Snake. From these two unions are descended the two moieties. Since only among animals do brothers and sisters mate it has become a rule that two descendants of the Jaguar, "Itciai", cannot marry with each other; nor can two descendants of the Snake, "Puaná", marry with each other. They must seek a mate from the other group. Thus an "Itciai" must always marry a "Puaná", and vice versa. Cross-cousin marriage solves this problem.

In this system, therefore, a man's children belong to his wife's moiety, from which he is socially excluded. His sister's children, on the other hand, are socially close to him since they too inherit moiety membership from their mother which is the same as his own. Deprived of his own children to carry on his traditions, a man looks to his sister's children to take their place. It is his nephews who will help him in hunting, who will come to his defence, who will take care of him in old age. As if in payment of such attention he gives them his daughters in marriage. Thus his sisters' sons become his sons-in-law.

Yaruro society is built around the hunting group, which in numbers is never stable. The hunt and the gathering of food such as roots and fruits calls for a certain amount of cooperative effort, but

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

621 596 rarely is there need to enlist the services of persons outside the family group for it.

A typical hunting family will consist of the "old man," his wife, their unmarried sons, unmarried and married daughters, their sons-in-law, perhaps an unmarried brother or two, or without a father-in-law with whom to live, the parents-in-law unless they be dead, and the grandchildren, that is, the children of the daughters. To this nucleus there may be attached, temporarily, stragglers from other groups, old people and young children without relatives to take care of them, and visiting children of the man's sisters.

When two hunting groups meet very often they will camp together for a few days. If food is plentiful they may spend some of the time in merrymaking. Those bands which are in touch with the ranchers may gather together to perform a given piece of work for the meager pay that they may receive.

621 178 In actual practice it is almost impossible for a hunting group to consist of a theoretical family as described. This is especially true now that the Yaruros are disappearing so rapidly. The women may have a series of husbands, as if one dies, or is killed, and the men may have a series of wives. Any genealogical table, therefore, is very confused.

616 621 596 The group of El Burron consisted of the following: Two sisters who had been married to Fauste, a cross-cousin but who was now dead; one of these women, Agapita, had two daughters, both of whom married. Isabel, one of these daughters, was dead at the time of my visit, but she had two children, a boy and a girl, who were still living. Her sister had married, lost her husband, but had four children, all living. The sister of the old woman, Agapita, had a boy and a girl, both of whom were living with the group. Fauste had a brother and a sister, now very old, and both living with the group. His brother had a daughter, Maria, who was also living with the group. On analysis we find, therefore, that, as the group existed at the time of my visit, there were twelve members of the Puanú moiety and three members of the Itciai moiety (fig. 23).

The other groups met show a greater confusion. So many individuals had died that there was no fixed form for any group. In some cases the groups would consist of several middle-aged men and women with wives and children and in other groups, such as Landaeta's and Pablo Reyes', they were led by old men—shamans. It is because of the breakdown of the social system under current conditions that the genealogies are not reproduced in this study at this time.

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606 604 This confusion affects the social relationships between various individuals. For instance, one Garcia was married to Landaeta's

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

606 daughter, but he should have married the daughter of one Juan
604 Bario, who was a parallel cousin of Landaeta, therefore, he actually married not his immediate cross cousin, but his cross cousin once removed. He kept strictly within the cross moiety marriage rule. However, this marriage brought complications in his life, because for all practical purposes he had two fathers-in-law to take care of rather than one. He solved this problem by living with Landaeta, his wife's father, half of the week, and the other half he spent with his uncle,

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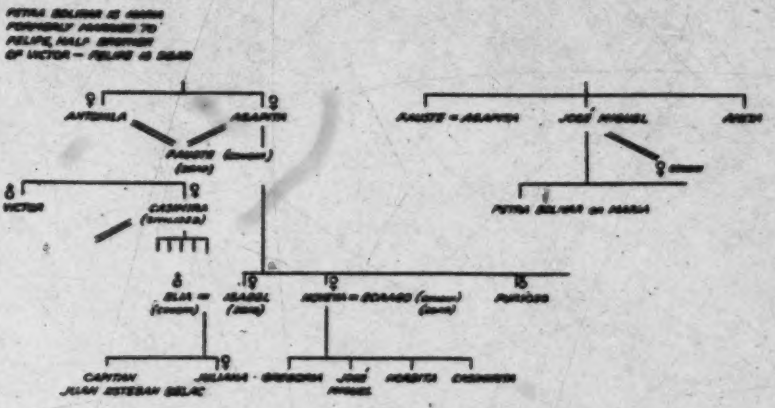

FIGURE 23.—Yaruro family hunting group at El Barron.

606 Juan Bario, whose daughter he would have married if she had lived.
604 The sense of service which he owed to his true uncle, his mother's brother, was strong enough to persist, even though it visited a hardship on him.

616 Within the tribal organization the individual looks to his moiety
476 for guidance, protection, and social intercourse. In return for this he is obligated to members of his moiety in a variety of ways. He acknowledges their affinity to him by seeking their company, by hunting together with them, and by sharing his food with them.

622 In the family hunting group its head is socially a stranger to most
593 of the people around him. Indeed, if he has no sisters or has sis-
626 ters who do not have any sons and has no brothers living with him, then socially he is almost out of place in the family hunting group. His wife, of course, belongs to the opposite moiety, and the children trace their descent through the mother. His wife's mother, sisters, brothers and their children belong to the same moiety
604 as herself. When his own children are old enough to take part in
593 hunting they look to their mother and to her brother, or brothers, for
476 guidance and it is toward the latter that they have all sorts of social obligations. To their father they show respect, but to the mother's